3: Ayrout M-5 (ca. 1935) 1945
MR13 Fellahin MR13

In Upper Egypt, strung out along the Nile Valley, are 635
eight more provinces, named with one exception after their chief towns (*bandars*). These are, from north to south, Giza, Beni-Suef, Fayûm, Minia, Assiut, Girga, Qena and Aswan.

At the head of each province, called *mudiriya*, is a high official called the *mudîr*. His authority comes directly from the Ministry of the Interior, and he is frequently transferred. If he distinguishes himself he is brought nearer the capital, or even becomes a minister. On the other hand, if he falls out of favour he may be sent further south. He settles as the Government's representative in the more or less important but never very attractive town which is the capital of his *mudiriya*. As he is naturally more in touch with great men than with small, he has no direct knowledge of the fellaheen, who moreover cannot come into direct contact with him. They hear him spoken of, pay the taxes due to him, and catch a glimpse of him when an official visit brings him to their village. They think of him as being of a higher race than themselves, and revere him as a kind of demi-god. To them he seems all-powerful.

Outside the chief town the Mudeer's authority is exer- 634
cised by Maamûrs. Each *mudiriya* is divided into *markaz* or 625
police districts, from three to seven in number, except for Gharbiya, the most densely populated, which has twelve. The *maamûr*, a kind of chief constable, controls a police force distributed among the principal villages of his *markaz*. He is an executive officer enjoying very wide powers. The fellah thinks them unlimited, and has a corresponding respect for the man who exercises them.

The Maamûr is the fellah's king. The story is told of a fellah who said to the Khedive 'Abbas, in all good faith: 'God save you, and make you our *maamûr*.'

Yet even the *maamûr* does not know the fellaheen, their affairs, or their families, except through the *omda*. And the limited knowledge which the fellah has of politics or administration — citizen and voter though he be — comes to him through his *omda*, who for him is the sum of the law.

Each of the 4,000 villages of Egypt is governed by an 622
omda or mayor. He is nominated from among the leading inhabitants of the village which he rules and of which he often owns a part. Indeed he cannot be a candidate for